

----- ST REPORT INTERNATIONAL ONLINE MAGAZINE -----
"The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"
from
STR Publishing Inc.
"

September 13, 1991

No.7.37

STReport International Online Magazine
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Jacksonville, Florida
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> 09/13/91: STReport #7.37 The Original 16/32 bit Online Magazine!

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> The Editor's Podium

What is an Atari Basher????? Many, many truly concerned folks in this ever shrinking Atari arena have been accused of being an Atari basher. One might find that most of the interesting folks you meet on the online services are telecommunicating for more than one reason. The majority frequent these services for information, friendship, good debates and of course, up to date files.

Back to my question, what is an Atari Basher... A difficult question to answer for any honest answer that sounds even the slightest bit accommodating will bring out the Atari lemmings and apologists in a hurry.

In any case, here goes; There is really no such thing as an Atari basher. To be a basher, one must absolutely hate everything about Atari. Its people, products and very existence. There is no such person or thing. There are however, those who LOVE the hardware and HATE the company. There are those who LOVE the hardware and silently TOLERATE the management. And finally, there are those who have LOVED the hardware and couldn't take any more double talk from the company's management and now are on other platforms. Bet you even know a few of those or at least about them.

Developers are in a precarious position, many of them will, in private or under the veil of be kept anonymous, tell you "the hardware has always been good but that the company's management is among the worst in recorded history." They do quickly add that they are not bashing Atari. They are genuinely concerned for both themselves and the users who Atari built themselves upon. The working classes worldwide, those on a fixed income. Remember the old company slogan? Power without the Price?

Dealers are also being forced to dance on eggshells. Should they become too vocal in voicing their dissatisfaction, they know that product flow, support and other factory/dealer factors will become non-existent or severely hampered. Why is it the apologists and those who continually defend never ask, "where are all the dealers?" "Why have the majority left?" Actually, there many questions that should be asked and are not. Why? Because, it seems, people who should be asking the questions are, amazingly, either intimidated by anticipation of Atari's reaction (usually vindictive) or are still hanging on to a non-existent hope of a miraculous cure to the current problems. It takes hard work, not miracles.

In defense of Atari.... Yes folks that's right. But I speak of the hardware only.

In my business, I have a total of 17 machines in use. Three are part of what I call major work stations, one is our support BBS and the remainder are in use in the shop.

The three work stations are

A)- (1) Mega4 STe with a built in 105mb, 260mb outboard, SF314, Omnimon Monitor and a KX P4450 laser.

B)- (1) Mega4 ST w/Turbo16, Image Systems 24" Monitor, Omnimon Monitor, 260mb hard disk, Canon Flatbed Scanner, SLM605 Laser.

C)- (1) 1040STe 4mb, 105mbHD, Indus GTS-100, Omnimon Monitor.

All hard disk systems, including the built in unit, are controlled with and formatted by ICD's great hard disk utility software.

As all can see, I am heavily involved with Atari hardware.. very heavily. And yes, I do criticize Atari's policies from time to time. I think their hardware is superb, always have and probably will for many months in the future. One thing is for sure, I will continue to use my equipment until such time as it no longer satisfies my needs. And hopefully, I will be able to update my systems with newer, more advanced Atari computers.

To see people invite others to LEAVE the Atari community simply because they disagree with one person's opinion is immature and offensive. The Atari community of users is a diverse and rather large, outspoken body of good people. Every so often, there creeps in those who feel they are doing the right thing by asking those who have something less than charitable to say about the current conditions in the Atari market to leave, go get a different computer... etc.

Personally, I am sure these folks think they are helping but in reality, they are doing far more damage than Atari itself. Why chase those who CARE enough to open up say what is hurting them? It doesn't make sense.

Atari is the one(s) who must listen and try to correct the ills in the ever shrinking marketplace. Not some misguided user demanding that other, dissatisfied users leave the userbase.

Its odd to see these happenings taking place while those who could blunt or offset the hostility are obvious by their silence. Yet... at other times they are most vociferous. One can't help but wonder if these so called 'leaders' have any idea that by their silence they are condoning the 'lynch mobs'. People, think about this.... if enough of the unhappy, dis-satisfied users do LEAVE.... what or who would be left? Yep, thats right... even the best of us, you included, have at times been irked about one thing or another about Atari. Suppose, just suppose every user who was ,at one time or another, irked at Atari 'jumped ship' or was invited to leave and did just that? It would be a disaster.

I am ever so grateful, for those who speak up about problems they or their friends are encountering with Atari as thats the best way to get them resolved by Atari. And I might add, in most cases, this is exactly what happens. Atari is contacted by the user and the problem gets solved.

Have I EVER seen Atari invite a user to leave and get a different computer? Nope..... Atari in all its ways, still realizes that a customer (user) even unhappy at times is STILL a customer. One that CAN be made happy, can be satisfied. Once they leave.... all is lost. Not only for Atari, but for all of us.

As always, thanks for your strong support!

Ralph

TODAY'S NEWS ..TODAY!

> STReport's Staff The regulars and this week's contributors!
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Please, submit letters to the editor, articles, reviews, etc...
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Genie..... ST.REPORT

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NEW "WIN \$25" WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Congrats to Clayton Walnum for winning a \$25 CompuServe credit for his upload of the game NOIDS to the Atari Arts Forum (GO ATARIARTS).

Congrats also to Stuart Coates for his winning upload DIVERT.LZH to the Atari Productivity Forum (GO ATARIPRO). Stuart wins a \$25 CompuServe credit for his contribution.

NEW PLAY-BY-MODEM GAMES IN ATARIARTS

The following files are now available in LIBRARY 1 ("New Uploads") of the Atari ST Arts Forum (GO ATARIARTS) courtesy of Forum member David Becker:

BGAMMO.ARC - Online backgammon can be played over the phone lines with a modem. Many options including the ability to play the computer make this a fun and challenging monochrome game. Freeware.

PAIGOW.ARC - Las vegas style PaiGow poker. Play against the computer or over the phone line with a friend! Monochrome freeware.

PROGRAM OF THE WEEK FROM DOUBLE CLICK

Last week's Double Click program of the week will drop DTR at the touch of a key! Download file DCDDTR.ARC from LIBRARY 13 of the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARIVEN).

NEW FROM CODEHEAD SOFTWARE

CodeHead has made arrangements to carry the very best vector graphics package for the ST/TT: Avant Vector, an object-oriented graphics program. Avant Vector features sophisticated automatic tracing abilities that will allow you to convert bit-image graphics to vector graphics consisting of lines, curves, and filled shapes.

This program is really incredible! Find out more about it by downloading CodeHead's demonstration file, AVDEMO.ARC, from LIBRARY 16 of the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARIVEN). Also download file AVPR.TXT for the complete press release of Avant Vector, plus additional information on another new software package called Repro Studio (a next-generation graphics program).

NEW IN ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM

Intuit Software in Menlo Park, California is investigating the expansion of their product line into the palmtop market. To help determine the features and potential of this growing area, they have contracted the services of a research firm to assemble an informative focus group.

on the News' service.

-- Nintendo Set for National Launch of
The Super Nintendo Entertainment System

Nintendo of America Inc., a subsidiary of the world's largest manufacturer and marketer of video games, Nintendo Co. Ltd., is gearing up for Monday's national launch of its 16-bit Super Nintendo Entertainment System (Super NES).

Nintendo feels that the Super NES will sale 2 million hardware units and 6 million pieces of software in 1991. Super NES will come packaged with "Super Mario World" and will carry a suggested retail price of \$199.95. They hope to have 10 Super NES game paks available by Christmas.

-- IBM and Apple Expected to Produce
Palm-Size Computer

Rumors say that IBM and Apple Computer Inc. are gearing up to form a joint venture in multimedia computing and to cooperate on radio computer links. According to the New York Times, industry executives and trade reports are saying the first project will be a palm-sized computer that can play CD-ROMS with a computer that can communicate by radio waves to follow.

-- Slow US Economy Slows Down Japanese
4-meg DRAM Production

The word from Japan is three top semiconductor makers there will reduce production of 4-megabit DRAM (dynamic random access memory) chips because of slow US economic recovery.

-- Sharp Claims Color LCD Breakthrough

The LQD011 is a color liquid crystal display (LCD) which Sharp claims is only 12mm thick and consumes just six watts of electricity. Sharp claims this 8.4 inch thin film transistor (TFT) based product is due to a new "edge light" technology.

The price for the new color LCD will be \$3,700 and the company hopes to begin producing the screen in quantity in April, 1992.

--Hayes Introduces the Smartmodem Optima 96

Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. has added the Optima 96 to its Smartmodem line. While the Optima 96 does not have all of the features of the Hayes Smartmodem Ultra, it is expected to be priced very aggressively to compete against the low-priced 9600 baud modems currently on the market.

The Optima 96, is a V.32 modem that provides standard CCITT V.32 connectivity for 9600 baud line speeds and CCITT V.42bis error-control and data compression for data throughput up to 38.4 Kbaud. The Optima 9600 also supports CCITT V.22bis (2400 baud), CCITT V.22 (1200 baud), and CCITT V.21 (300 baud), as well as industry standards 103 (300 baud) and

212A (1200 baud).

Optima 96 communicates asynchronously and synchronously as well as supports Hayes AutoSync, a standard Smartmodem feature that allows the system's asynchronous communications port to transmit data synchronously, which Hayes says eliminates the need for an SDLC or Bisync card.

-- Microsoft Continues to Grow

Bill Gates, Microsoft Corp. chairman, feels that his firm will continue to grow despite the slumping computer industry. Mr. Gates credited Windows for most of the growth.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, Microsoft's net income grew 66% to \$463 million based on a 56% sales increase of \$1.8 billion.

-- Hitachi Sets Record!

According to Hitachi, it has set a new data transmission record of 10 gigabits per second across a 100 kilometer distance. The old record was 1.6 gigabits per second across 40 kilometers.

The reason for this radical increase is a new super-fast optical element that Hitachi has developed, "APD". This is considered to be an important technology in the creation of Integrated Services Digital Networks which can involve transferring millions of bits of pictorial data.

-- The Fast Just Got Faster, Telebit Introduces the World's Fastest Modem

The Telebit T3000 was recently announced by Telebit. The company claims it is the fastest on the market, capable of sending up to 57,600 bps. The modem is compatible with other V.32bis, V.32 and 300, 1200, 2400 bps CCITT and Bell modems.

According to a company spokesman, the T3000 uses the standard V.32bis and the V.42bis data compression standards. But where most of the V.32bis modems only provide speeds up to 38,400 bps, the T3000 is 50% faster. Using a 4:1 data compression routine, realizes the full capacity of the V.32bis modem.

The retail price of the T3000 is \$1,095 and it carries a two-year warranty.

-- GAO Finds Stock Market Computers Not Adequately Safeguarded

A study by the General Accounting Office (GAO) of the nation's six computerized stock exchanges - New York, American, Midwest, Pacific, and Philadelphia, as well as those of the National Association of Securities Dealers, which oversees the NASDAQ over-the-counter market - found that only the NASDAQ system had adequate safeguards. Between them, the six exchanges handle over 98 percent of nation's estimated \$2 trillion annual stock trading volume.

-- To Help Reduce Overcrowded Jails, Computers
To Keep Track of Defendants Living at Home

Next month, Marion County, Indiana will start a pilot program which will involve computer tracking of defendants in criminal cases who live at home and are awaiting trial. What makes this program different is that it is the first that will keep track of individuals awaiting trial and is hoped to reduce overcrowded jails.

A computerized telephone system will call each defendant as often as is deemed necessary. When the call comes, the defendant will take a photo of themselves with a camera attached to a TV-like unit. The image will then be transmitted to the Volunteers of America office in Indianapolis, a national Christian human services organization who have agreed to install the units and report violations to the court.

-- Hay Buyers/Sellers Helped by
Purdue University

Indiana farmers can now easily link up with prospective hay buyers and sellers by using a special computer system that was established by the Purdue University.

Using computers, modems and a BBS system, the callers can search the database for buyers or sellers of their hay crop. The hay locator system runs on a 3B2 system under Unix System V. The modem access number is 317-494-6643.

-- National Semiconductor Loses
\$168 Million for the First-Quarter

National Semiconductor Corp. announced a first-quarter loss of \$168 million based on sales of \$411 million down from \$442.7 million a year ago.

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Other telecom services may have additional charges. Canadian Tymnet users have an additional telecom charge. Office Time access (7 a.m. to 7 p.m., weekdays) may have an additional charge. And of course, other restrictions may apply. But this is still an amazing deal!

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> CONNECTICUT SHOW STR SHOW NEWS

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"What a wonderful day!"

Connecticut Atarifest '91
=====

by Harry Steele & STEve Cook
BCS/Atari

Ah! What a wonderful day for the Connecticut AtariFest '91. You couldn't ask for a more perfect summer day. Warm, low humidity, just great. STEve Cook and I left Boston Friday afternoon for the 3 hour trek to the Hilton Hotel in Bridgeport, CT. Before I forget... Many Thanks to my wife Joanne for agreeing to babysit for my two greyhounds, two cats, two rabbits, one mouse and STEve Cook's two playful dogs. The 'puppy' being a 13 month-old, 100-pound German Shepherd.

After checking into the Hilton, STEve and I gravitated to the Lounge to see who we might find. Lo and behold, Bob Brodie, Rick Flashman and Jeff Lomicka talking about Dusseldorf. They really know how to put on an AtariFest. Bob was happy, I think, to see the boys from Boston again. Bob mentioned to me that the CT Fest will be a fairly small show and he didn't let the group get carried away with enthusiasm and turn it into a national Fest like we did last year at the New England AtariFest '90 in Boston.

Well, 6:00 A.M. comes early, Mickey "D's" for breakfast, started setting up for the Fest at 8:00 A.M. STEve Cook and I were representing The Boston Computer Society - Atari Users Group. The Connecticut AtariFest '91 was sponsored by the FACE and STARR user groups along with Computers Etc. Brian Gockley did an outstanding job of putting on this Fest. Everything ran smoothly and was well organized.

Attendees:

Atari Corp:

Bob Brodie, Director of Communications, always a major attraction, was his usual great self, talking to everyone. When Bob gave his seminar, the whole show floor emptied out into the seminar room leaving most of the vendors to themselves. Many left their own booth to hear Bob's talk which was highlighted by his personal responses to the many questions that were asked by the audience.

Atari Explorer:

John Jainschigg, Publisher, Editor for Atari's flagship magazine. His technical know-how and clear writing style is well known in the Atari world. John gave an exciting lecture on how Atari Explorer magazine is published.

Applications & Design Software:

Angela Gockley demonstrated the Universal Item Selector 3.3 and the much awaited Universal Network.

The Boston Computer Society:

Atari Users Group, STEve Cook and Harry Steele, talked to many Atari enthusiasts, selling PD library disks, IMG clip art, PageStream PD fonts.

The hit of their booth was the GOGO Dancer demo both monochrome and color versions. A donation of a BCS 'T' shirt was made to Bob Brodie. He tried to pay for it, but we wouldn't let him.

GENie:

Darlah Pine was unable to attend due to a family crisis.

GFA Basic:

John Barger demonstrated the latest upgrade to their powerful programming language which is capable of transporting its code and programs to run on MS-DOS machines.

Gribnif Software:

Rick Flashman, Dan Wilga and the lovely Tricia Metcalf demonstrated the famous Neodesk 3, as well as a plethora of new products: Cardfile 3, STalker 3, STeno 3, and Arabesque.

Alternative Hardware:

Leo Taylor and Joe Mardo had several customized hardware products in wooden cabinets and towers. Their best demo was an Atari running a PC CAD program running an expensive HP color printer/plotter which amazed most of the attendees.

SoftLogik:

Bill Caferelli and Bernie Paist demonstrated Pagestream 2.1 with color printouts, and were so busy talking to people that they didn't get a chance to see any of the seminars.

ST Atari Road Runners user group:

Eleanor Andujar and my old friend Madeline, who is just a joy to talk to, worked their user group booth selling software at unbelievable prices.

Step Ahead Software:

Nevin Shalit showed Tracker/ST, a sophisticated address book/mail merge/label printing program. At his seminar, Nevin demo'ed Retouche and DiDot.

Taylor Ridge Books:

Clayton Walnum displayed his C-Manship Complete book on everything you need to know to program in C.

TidBit Software:

Jeffrey Lomicka showed the GOOD Back-Up Utility, a hard disk backup program with a unique incremental backup method and checksum capability to encourage you to back up your hard drive frequently.

All in all, a good time was had by all. The group hopes to have another CT AtariFest again sometime in the future. The next time, being bigger and better.

"After hours" thoughts:

All of those who remained until the final hour of the CT AtariFest were treated to a question and answer session with Bob Brodie. One of the things that Mr. Brodie discussed was the Professional Systems Group and the AEGIS Program. I feel this is definitely a step in the right direction and should have been started way back in 1985. Reaching out to work with developers and dealers is truly necessary if the Atari computer is to remain a viable alternative.

Mr. Brodie discussed WORD UP 3.0, although no release dates were mentioned. When Atari purchased the rights to WORD UP, they brought half of the staff (one person) from NEOCEPT back with them. This is enabling them to continue the development on WORD UP. The new WORD UP will utilize FSM GDOS. FSM GDOS is expected to be ready in October.

The TT is selling very well and the new ones will have a 1.44 Meg floppy disk drive with the appropriate controller chip. UNIX for the TT may be in developers hands this December.

The engineers and designers at the Design Facility near Dallas are burning the midnight oil, Bob says. If you see them leaving at 8:30 in morning, they didn't just get there, they worked all night long. I wonder what new surprises Atari has up their proverbial sleeve?

Bob related some encouraging and humorous "war stories" about some of the many shows he has attended.

Don't Be a BIG BLUE LEMMING! Make your own decisions, check-out an Atari!
(STEVE's new Atari slogan! -grin-)

> The Flip Side STR Feature "....a different viewpoint"
=====

A Little of This, A Little of That
=====

by Michael Lee

A helpful hint from R.Belanger - Cat. 24, Topic 1, Message 272 - From the Cooking and Baking Roundtable on Genie...

I do re-use dryer sheets, but not in the dryer. Instead, I capture the "used" sheets to use to clean my monitor screen. It's far cheaper than buying "screen wipes" and provides the same antistatic quality that is beneficial for monitor or TV screens.

Comments about Powermonger from KWA! on Delphi...

Gee, I've never reviewed any game before. So bear with me please. Basically, Powermonger plays alot like Populous; you struggle to attain greater power in order to wipe out the enemy. I haven't played Populous for some time, but I think you have to kill every single enemy in order to win the game.

However, in Powermonger, this is not necessary (thank goodness!). There is a scale on the screen, and if it tips steeply on your side, you can retire and thus win the game. Powermonger has more details;

characters move about to fish, chop trees, make weapons, etc. The sprites are smaller, due to the enormous amount of info. displayed on the screen. You can zoom in to get a better look or pick up specific objects. The enemies you will face can be of several different groups, so strategy is a must if you want to win the game. I find Powermonger more involving than Populous, for you have to gather people to build a bigger army, ensure that food is always available - - otherwise, you will see your followers leaving you. Also, it is better to have stronger weapons, so you will need time and resources to make them. Sometimes, you have to make enough boats to transport your army across the vast ocean to another land.

Once you have conquered a land, you may save it to disk. Overall, Powermonger is a great game. I like Populous, and Powermonger even more, but both games are unique. I hope this helps!

P.S. In order to save a game, you will require the on-disk special formatting utility. However, mine doesn't work and ECA had to format my game disks. Check with your dealer if this problem has been fixed.

Just to show you that not everything is serious when you're online, here are some jokes that you might enjoy - from the TeleJoke RoundTable on Genie...

From E.Merrill - Cat. 5, Topic 3, Message 7...

The Pessimist's guide to Engineer-talk
(what they say - what they mean)

"That's interesting"

- Wow! I've never seen anything remotely like that before.

"We'll just run diagnostics"

- I wonder if that'll give us a clue.

"So we've eliminated XXX"

- It's probably XXX, but it's bloody hard to get at.

"I've just powered it down"

- I tripped over that bloody power cord again

"Ok, that's good"

- What the heck was that noise?!?

"We've noticed some failure evidence"

- Something's burning...

"If you'll just..."

- I don't want to be the one to blame when it crashes

"Yes, you'd expect to see that..."

- Hell, that's stuffed as well!

Some limericks from Stephen Kahn...

There once was a System called DOS,
Which threw all its users for a loss.
Don't worry, said Bill,
Just take this pill,

And my GUI will cover your OS.

There once was a company called Big Blue,
That grew very peeved with Bill and his crew.
Replied our cool dude,
"Don't come unGUID,
You can have your Windows and OS/2."

Fourty-Five different definitions of what the initials IBM stand for.
Compiled from about 30-40 different posts...

- 1) <I>'ve een <M>ugged
- 2) <I> uy <M>oney
- 3) <I>t's etter <M>anually
- 4) <I> ought <M>acintosh
- 5) <I>'ve een <M>isled
- 6) <I>t it <M>e
- 7) <I>tty itty <M>achines
- 8) <I>t ombs <M>any
- 9) <I>gnorant ull <M>anure
- 10) <I>diotic ovine <M>anure
- 11) <I>ncessant owel <M>ovement
- 12) <I>tty itty <M>orons
- 13) <I>nferior ut <M>arketable
- 14) <I>diotic rainless <M>utants
- 15) <I>ncredibly oring <M>achinery
- 16) <I>tty itty <M>icroprocesser
- 17) <I>ntroverted rain <M>auler
- 18) <I>mbeciles ecome <M>anagers
- 19) <I>nstall igger <M>achines
- 20) <I> ecame <M>acintosh
- 21) <I> lame <M>icrosoft
- 22) <I>cky lue <M>achines
- 23) <I>diotic ull Meter
- 24) <I>diots' ewilderment <M>achines
- 25) <I>diots ought <M>e
- 26) <I>mmense ins of <M>oney
- 27) <I>mperialism y <M>arketing
- 28) <I>mpactical, ut <M>arketable
- 29) <I>n a efuddled <M>anner
- 30) <I>ncest reeds <M>orons
- 31) <I>ndustry's iggest <M>istake
- 32) <I>nert lue <M>onoliths
- 33) <I>nstalled y <M>asochists
- 34) <I>nstitute of roken <M>inds
- 35) <I>ntrepid ureaucratic <M>adness
- 36) <I>nvoluntary owel <M>ovement
- 37) <I>t eats <M>attel
- 38) <I>nescapable ut <M>ediocre
- 39) <I> arely <M>ove
- 40) <I>ll egotten <M>achine
- 41) <I>t's a roken <M>achine
- 42) <I>nternational it <M>anglers
- 43) <I>nteresting ut <M>eaningless
- 44) <I>dolized y <M>orons
- 45) <I> e needing more <M>oney

CIS....

I agree that this is a niche market that Atari could quite profitably exploit, but its all dependent on getting a solid UNIX implementation out the door. Lets keep our fingers crossed that something solid is shown at Dusseldorf shortly.

More comments from Jeff (Intersect Software).....

I absolutely agree with you. Unless a "solid" implementation of UNIX is released I don't see a future for Atari. TOS or otherwise. On the other hand if a SOLID UNIX is released and the rumors of Client-Server GEM are true then I see a brighter future for the ST.

From what I've been able to glean from MANY sources (all rumor). Unix implementation was done. Some Optimization was still needed but BETA testing was proceeding in Germany.

Projects for UNIX that still needed implementation were:

1) ST Emulation under UNIX in a window. A massive undertaking that justifiably would take many months.

2) Appletalk networking.

3) Client-Server Unix to GEM terminal (ST). A project that I heard rumors about and thought, "wow finally someone is thinking".

Client-Server Unix to GEM Terminal would have two modes determined by the type of client, X-windows terminal or ST running a GEM terminal emulation.

If a X-Windows terminal a series of X-Windows commands mimicking the appearance of GEM windows would be used or if a GEM terminal (ST or PC running a GEM emulation) it would work something like the Instant Sound and Graphics emulation for Interlink.

Instead of sending graphics BIT BY BIT it's sent as a series of GEM VDI commands. The IGS Terminal Emulation then passes those commands to GEM in the local ST. So 10 bytes could draw a scroll bar, 8 bytes a box with a fill pattern, etc. X-Windows is done the same way in the Client-Server mode but X-windows is much more massive/flexible and requires a multi-thousand dollar terminal.

Let's face it, right now very few university students (except for the Science and engineering students) use the University Unix mainframes because the operating system is too difficult for them. This scheme would solve that problem.

With Client-Server UNIX to ST software released and TT UNIX available we might be able to see some ST's sold to university students for their use on the University's Mainframe. With 520 STe's with monitor selling for less than \$600 (street price) it's the least expensive way for them to get GUI terminals (ASCII terminals are available at about \$300.00). The University might be able to get an even better price direct from Atari.

In the long term it's more than a niche market. Apple (under JOBS) went to great pains to insure the University "niche". Those University students eventually become Teachers who have a say in the Public school computer purchases.

If UNIX does manage to evolve into a "standard" for the common man it will be because of GUI. Atari could have a major role in this over the long term if they follow through on UNIX and Client-Server GEM.

From Loc Duval...

Hello, that's me again... Here some news on ASV, the Atari Unix for the TT.

It is now finished and I have tested the beta release in Germany during the Atari Dusseldorf Show.

Unix has been converted by a UK firm: Unisoft. It is a Unix System V release 4 with some BSD tools. X-Windows 11.4 has been ported by US company. Just like Motif 1.1.2.

Over this you have an amazing GUI called X-Wish, running under Motif, and developed by french firm: NSL (Non Standard Logic). You also have an amazing tool for Motif programmers: X FACEMAKER. It is an very friendly Interface Maker for Motif applications. All this is in standard on the 320 Mo hard disk, given with the TT/X.

You also have: The GNU C compiler The GNU C++ compiler The GNU source Level Debugger NFS/RFS An ethernet board (on the VME bus) A new mouse with 3 buttons...

Until next week.....

:HOW TO GET YOUR OWN GENIE ACCOUNT:

To sign up for GENie service:

Set your communications software to Half Duplex (or Local Echo)

Call: (with modem) 800-638-8369.

Upon connection type HHH (RETURN after that).

Wait for the U#= prompt.

Type: XTX99587,CPUREPT then, hit RETURN.

GENie costs only \$4.95 a month for unlimited evening and weekend access to more than 100 services including electronic mail, online encyclopedia, shopping, news, entertainment, single-player games, and bulletin boards on leisure and professional subjects. With many other services, including the biggest collection of files to download and the best online games, for only \$6 per hour.

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE! Any time during your first month of membership if you are not completely satisfied, just ask for your \$4.95 back.

> ABOUT ATARI STR Spotlight "Just expressing themselves..."
=====

TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS
=====

Compiled by Michael Lee

From Dan Fruchey - Cat. 18, Topic 16, Message 78 - from the ST Round-
table on Genie...

Dear friends and Atari faithful; I am now writing a letter which I consider extremely painful but necessary. I have done my best to support Atari, as an owner of the original 16K 800 through the 520 ST and through various upgrades culminating in a MEGA 4 with all the Atari peripherals including hard disks and a laser printer.

I have staunchly defended the corporation and its products in print, online, and through various conferences.

I have bought (and written for) the magazines, sold my own Atari products (and found I couldn't make an adequate return due to slow sales), supported the products of other vendors, I even tried to open my own Atari computer store but investigation of the concept led me to the conclusion that the market could not support a store and the corporation who sells the machines was unwilling or unable to supply an adequate volume of machines that would help me develop the market further in my area.

I served as disk librarian and board member for an Atari users group that at one time consisted of over 300 members and I have watched it dwindle to a hand full of die hards who either could not afford another machine or could not believe that the Atari market was simply a ghost who refused to lie down along with the Altair, Adam, and other machines whose time had come and gone.

I watched the Atari computer stores dwindle. Even this week I accompanied an Atari die hard to one of the once-great San Francisco Bay Area Atari only computer stores and watched him pick the latest products from a 30% off bin for a "moving" sale. The store had progressively gone through smaller and smaller storefronts until this month when they were selling off their Monitorm monitor, Atari laser printer, floor model computers, and other standard store paraphernalia at a cash register that was plastered with a poster that boldly proclaimed "All Sales

Final."

I worked with St Applications until they folded, proudly wrote for STart until their demise, and in the end I lost a great deal of money in support of the Atari market still fighting to proclaim the wonders of "The Computer That Jack Built."

From a virtual flood of hardware and software I watched the flow dwindle and in some areas have watched the availability of software and hardware completely vanish. From a well established base of Atari developers and renowned manufacturers I have watched support and new applications dwindle until I could not even obtain support for good products that were once the pride of the Atari line.

I still provide support to the few businesses that are standing by their Atari machines due to a lack of funds (although they have ALL chosen new systems to purchase once their financial picture gets better - including large companies that have been major supporters of Atari DTP in their catalogs and advertising). Both of the dealers in my area who supported the Atari solution dried up almost a year ago, one sells only IBM through a much smaller storefront and the other made the decision too late and no longer owns his own business). Our closest dealer is 65 miles away.

I still love my Atari machine. It is fast, easy to use, and the output is superb. The hardware is all the things the corporation is not and the promises and rhetoric which issue forth from Atari headquarters is no longer believed. My Atari friends and I simply nod in understanding pity when Atari announces a new product, knowing it will arrive too late with too many shortcomings and not enough support (either from the corporation or disillusioned developers) to ever make the machine into what it was meant to be.

I still keep and use my Atari for only one purpose - desktop publishing. But this market cannot truly support the corporation when so many other areas are lagging or non-existent. I salute the developers and many manufacturers who have made wonderful products that have made me still use my machine for a short while longer. Particularly Nathan Potechin and the fine staff of ISD who receive my admiration and respect. It is my fondest wish that they would develop Calamus for the PC market. It outstrips anything available and I believe they would not be disappointed.

It is with sorrow I admit that I recently committed myself fully to the PC market. The hardware, software, support, and user base all exist in this market on a level that is staggering. I have found that Atari can no longer lay claim to the "Power Without The Price" motto as their systems and software are, in most cases, no longer state-of-the art and most software is no longer ported to the Atari platform and very few developers dedicate the time to create new applications and entertainment products specifically designed for the Atari market. The 60 million PC users in North America wield clout that we 250,000 Atari users will never achieve and our attempts at addressing this problem with our favorite hardware manufacturer have failed miserably.

With all of its bumps and warts (DOS, etc.) I know that the companies will answer their phones tomorrow, not a machine politely informing me that the phone has been disconnected and there is no forwarding number. I can choose from a variety of software manufacturers who currently work to upgrade their products, not pick the only product that is still being

supported in a field of drifting relics.

What more can I say? I have done all that I can and it is not enough. There is no word of encouragement I can offer, no parting wisdom that will somehow change an unchangeable blindness of that part of the Tramiel clan. Good luck my fellow Atarians, you will need it. For myself I will hold onto my machine and treasure it till the keyboard freezes up and the cables fray but I can longer support the unsupportable. As rapidly as possible I am changing my files over to my new system knowing that it may take many years for the PC market to achieve the maturity and functionality Atari users experienced since the mid 1980's. To those of you who also go my way I look forward to sharing my thoughts with you in another GENie forum and in magazines of another type.

I'll look back to read your comments but forgive me if I don't reply. The issue has been decided, it is not a happy choice but a necessary one. I'll always treasure the knowledge and pleasure I derived from the system, I'll always treasure the friendships made. But I will never go back.

Unhappily, Dan Fruchey, Former STart DTP Contributing Editor, Former ST Applications Columnist, Former Atari Computer Club Board Member (ST ACE of Northern California), Former Atari Enthusiast

**** And Now, The Other Side ****

From WALLY - Cat. 18, Topic 16, Message 82 - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

I've no doubt that Atari is in a slump right now, but they have a pretty sturdy plan laid out and are doing their best to follow it. Things are actually starting to look up, even though the road is a long one and we are just now taking it.

I've read the entire thread in this topic and have this to say:

I'm stationed at the Coast Guard Air Station in Sitka, Alaska. Computer support of any kind up here is nonexistent, and you just can't drive somewhere to find it; there aren't any roads leading off the island.

Everytime I've had a question, wanted to make a purchase, or needed service I've been more than happy with Far North Computer and Cave Creek Computer. They offer expert service, expert advice, expert everything.

My setup is 110% usable by anyone...

In the last 1 1/2 years, I've had eleven friends buy MS-DOS type computers. Two bought Packard Bell Legend-types, three bought differing models of Radio Shack's T1000, the other six bought God knows what (Dell, Leading Edge, etc...)

Of these eleven people only two are still using their computers, and they hate them. One of the guys with the PB actually quit GENie because his computer was too hard to use. None of them can afford any of the software they want for their computers. None of them can afford to get the cards necessary to have joysticks and hand scanners and the like. All of them come to me for help using their computers and I give them as much help as is humanly possible. They still don't know how to use their computers (something like un-ARcing a file is completely out of their

reach, and they keep little notebooks to help remember procedures, etc.).

Inevitably, when showing them how to use their computers the issue of my computer comes up, i.e., "Hey Wally, what kind of computer do you have? What makes it easier to use?" Inevitably, I bring them to my set-up for a demo. They honestly can't believe a computer would be that easy to use. Likewise they can't believe the low prices I pay for software that does what they want to do. Software they have been putting off buying because it was so expensive for their machines.

I have two friends that bought Mac's. They have as much wrapped up in their keyboard, monitor, modem, 40 meg HD, and computer as I do with:

1040STe w/4meg RAM
Emerson Multi-sync
Seagate 85meg HD w/ ICD host +
Migraph hand scanner
SupraModem 2400
KX-P1124 printer

Like my IBM-type friends, they often need help using their computers, and can't afford software. Like my IBM friends, they wish they had bought an Atari.

Of course, up here the lack of service makes ALL computers equal in attaining service...

I will be buying a SuperCharger (286, I hope), but I will never buy an IBM-type computer and dump my Atari. Why? Because this little Atari will do everything any other computer will do. Why? Because I can make this little Atari do whatever I want it to do. Why? Because I don't have to worry about being snubbed for what type of IBM clone or Mac I own at computer stores and in RT's. Why? Because I have all the programs and support I need and more things are coming out every month. Why? Because I don't have to pay IBM/Mac prices for hardware and software. Why? Because I am not a POWER USER, just a computer user.

I am not a dyed-in-the-wool Atari fanatic, just a computer user happy with his setup.

Regards,

Wally
the kayaking hermit
in Alaska

> Codehead News! STR InfoFile
=====

Automatic vectoring has arrived!

For immediate release

CodeHeadQuarters
September 12, 1991

CODEHEAD SOFTWARE ANNOUNCES AVANT VECTOR & REPRO STUDIO!
 =====

Automatic vectoring has arrived!

CodeHead Software is releasing two powerful new high-end graphics and image manipulation packages for Atari computers -- Avant Vector and Repro Studio! We're proud to bring these excellent state of the art products to North America.

At CodeHead Software we're quite selective about the software we use personally. Not very many programs get a big "WOW!" out of us. But to say that we found Avant Vector and Repro Studio impressive is a major understatement ... in fact, they blew us away!

--==* Avant Vector *==--

Avant Vector is an object-oriented graphics program, with sophisticated automatic tracing abilities which allow the conversion of bit-image graphics (such as IMG files or Degas drawings) to vector graphics consisting of lines, curves, and filled shapes. Vector graphics have several big advantages over bit-image graphics; the most important is that once an image has been converted to a mathematical vector description, it can be scaled up or down to any size without losing detail or looking "blocky".

Bit-image graphics can be imported into Avant Vector in many formats, including IMG, TIFF, IFF, and Degas (both compressed and uncompressed), and also vector graphics in the CVG (Calamus), GEM (GEM 3 metafile), and EPS (Encapsulated Postscript) formats. You can save vector graphics in CVG, GEM, or EPS formats (in Avant Plot) for use in desktop publishing applications. New drawings can also be created from scratch with Avant Vector, and up to seven graphics windows can be opened at once with cut-and-paste and merge functions. The graphics created by Avant Vector can be imported into most popular Atari DTP programs, and can also be printed directly from within Avant Vector itself, with support for the Atari Laser, NEC 24-pin, and Epson 9-pin printers.

In a recent review of seven auto-tracing programs for the Mac, PC, and Atari ST/TT in a European magazine, Avant Vector was rated the best of the bunch! The reviewer gave Avant Vector high marks for its totally unique "manual tracing" mode, which snaps curves and points along a bit image AS YOU DRAW THEM!

The most amazing thing about Avant Vector is its smooth, almost transparent interface and extremely simple, consistent operation. You can learn everything you need to get around in minutes, and be creating extraordinary graphics in no time at all!

There are two versions of Avant Vector. The high-end version, Avant

Plot, contains extensive plotter support for serious professional applications, and EPS file import/export features. Both Avant Vector and Avant Plot are available immediately.

---* Repro Studio *---

Repro Studio is a next-generation graphics program with a dazzling array of professional features. Available with or without a hand-held scanner (256 gray level), Repro Studio is the first ST graphics program to let you create and edit images with true grey tones, as well as standard monochrome or color images in many different formats.

In Repro Studio the dots that make up your image can be set to a grey level instead of being simply on (black) or off (white). If you have a standard ST monochrome monitor, grey scales won't be shown on screen but rather are displayed as fill patterns. But you can edit them and manipulate them with Repro Studio for use with DTP applications and in professional printing situations.

In addition to its grey level capabilities, Repro Studio has an enormous number of powerful tools for working with bit-image graphics, including flexible cut-and-paste functions, many shape and fill options, bezier curves, lasso and masking functions, pixel prioritizing, raster "screens" for printing purposes, anti-aliasing and dithering, the ability to combine pictures in many ways, the ability to read and use GDOS, Calamus, and Adobe Postscript fonts, and much more.

Repro Studio is able to load many different types of graphics files, including IMG, TIFF, Degas, Art Director, and Neochrome formats. After editing, touching up, or scanning, images can be saved in any of the above formats, or as Postscript files.

Repro Studio comes with or without a 256 gray scale scanner. It is expected to be available by the end of the year, and like its companion, Avant Vector, will work with all ST, STe, and TT computers.

---* Pricing *---

Retail pricing for Avant Vector and Repro Studio is as follows:

Avant Vector	\$ 495
Avant Plot	1195
Repro Studio	195
Repro Studio w/scanner ..	895

---* Special Introductory Prices *---

If you place your order before December 31, 1991, you can purchase Avant Vector or Avant Plot for the following prices:

Avant Vector	\$ 445 (a savings of \$50.00)
Avant Plot	1095 (a savings of \$100.00)

Order directly from us before the end of the year and save! (Most major credit cards accepted.)

For further information contact:

CodeHead Software
PO Box 74090
Los Angeles, CA 90004

voice (213) 386-5735
fax (213) 386-5789

> Once upon a Time... STR Feature "In the Garden of Atari..."
=====

In the Garden of Atari...

Once upon a time there was a beautiful garden that had some, if not the finest, fruit to be found anywhere in the land of Tram. This Garden was ruled by a wise and successful King of many years experience. This Lord of the Garden had produced another Garden some ages ago (relatively speaking) that was the most successful of its kind. The Garden Lord was tiring of the effort that had to be put forth to maintain this "new" Garden. The Garden Lord said to his sons, "Here ye my sons, I will entrust this Garden to your hands, water it, feed it and make it grow as you have seen your father do for many years". The sons, Princes of the Garden as they became, took the burden from their father and said "Father, we will do as you bid us, we will make you proud!".

So the Princes planted the Garden with a new plant. This plant was unlike any other in any of the other Kingdoms. The plant, as the Princes so named it, was "Estee, Pride of the Land of Tram". Word soon spread about the "Estee" plant and many came to see the wondrous new fruit from the old Lords' Garden.

Many people from lands across the Great Sea came to see the Estee plant and wonder. These people soon sent emissaries from their Lords to find out if they could purchase the fruits of the mighty Estee plant. The "Keepers of the Garden" agreed to sell them the fruits of the Garden. The Princes of the Garden agreed also. So when the Plants starting producing the wonderful fruit, it was almost all shipped by the Great Sailing Ship to the land of Urope across the Great Sea.

The people in the land of Tram received enough of the Estee fruit to whet their appetite for more, much more. The Tramites approached their Princes about receiving more of this wonderful fruit that there Great Land produced. Alas, the word from the Castle, Vale of the Sun, was not so encouraging. The Princes proclaimed to the people that there is not enough fruit to go around. The shipments to the Land of Urope had seriously caused shortages of Estee fruit available to the "Home Folk". But do not fret said the Royal Family, for we will see that the Tramites get all they want from now on. The people believed their Rulers and were pacified.

Time passed. The people cried for more Estee fruit. The Word from the Vale of the Sun was the same, " You will be receiving the Estee fruit that we promised real soon now". The Tramites waited. Time passed...

The peoples from the other Kingdoms soon forgot about the Estee fruit and went about their everyday business with there own gardens, producing competing fruits for sale to the people of the many Kingdoms across the Great Land.

Time passed...

The people of the Land of Tram wanted more of their Estee fruit. They had worked The Garden, plowed the rows, fed the plants and put many pounds of sweat into their home Garden fruit. Still they received only a small percentage of Estee for their labor. The Word from the Castle was that the majority of the Estee fruit would be sold to the local people first then the remainder would be sent to the Land of Urope. Time passed...

Soon MANY of the Tramites became disenchanted with the Royal Family and its many promises. These people the left the Kingdom of Tram for other more honest and truthful lands where the people were given what the Lords promised.

Friction began to rise within the Court. Some of the formerly well-liked officers of the Court of Atari were dismissed. The people were shocked! Why are these the people to be removed from the Court, they are the most trusted of all in the Court of Atari.

Suddenly, with a flash of light and the odor of cordite, there appeared two wise old wizards. These wizards had been in the land of Tram long before it was known as Tram. These Wizards were all about the land talking and listening to the people of this good land. One Wizard named Troperts, approached the Princes of the Garden and foretold of bad things to come if the people of Tram were not given the priority over the Uropeans. The other Wizard named Tenz, also approached the Princes and told them only things he knew they wanted to hear. Troperts was then frowned upon as a cynic and rabble rouser. "Leave our Court!" said the Princes to Troperts.

to be con't.....

> COLORSCAN STR Review
=====

Color IMG processing

COLORSCAN by SKWare One
=====

by Doyle C. Helms

Color IMG processing

Color Scan is a program that processes dithered IMG files from any source (MI-GRAPH hand scanner or ANY scanner that can produce dithered scans). From within this program you load and manipulate these images with user definable color palettes or pre-defined default palettes. Once the image has been completed, you can then save the finished image in one of many formats.

DOCUMENTATION-

The documentation for COLOR SCAN comes on the program disk pre-formatted for immediate printout. The documentation is very well written and understandable to even the most novice user. Mr. Webb's writing is enjoyable and humorous. The manual amounts to 16 pages with no table of contents or index. There is a "quick reference" printable document for fast lookups, so indexes or content tables are really not required for a manual this short.

PERFORMANCE-

I have used this program for several weeks and have processed 100's of images in just about every possible option and I can gladly report of NO problems. The program runs only in ST low rez. COLOR SCAN will run in ST (8 true gray scale, or 16 psuedo-gray) or the ST(E) true 16 gray scale. I am currently using a Mega 2 with a T-20 accelerator. The program is of a very acceptable speed (in processing) at 8MHz. The 20MHz mode is just a sheer joy to work with!

USEFULNESS-

This program can be as useful as ANY paint program. How useful is a paint program? Well, it can be as much a pleasure as any game (more so to me) for passing time, expressing creativity etc. I personally enjoy scanning images and then mixing them in various ways to produce a work of art <large humble grin>. In my experience with video scanners, I have found that this program in conjunction with Touch-Up/hand Scanner far exceeds the capture of very small details that Computer Eyes could never achieve. Once I have an acceptable scanned color (which is not difficult to achieve) image I then save the image in its native format (IM0, color IMG format). I then save the image as either a TNY or Spectrum file. The Spectrum file is saved in 20 color format vice the standard 16. The other SAVE options include DEGAS P11 and P1 and IFF (which saves the file full length vice a cropped image in DEGAS or TNY if the image is larger than screen size). COLOR SCANNed color IMG files can be exported over to SEURAT 2.21+ for editing and saving in any format.

USER INTERFACE-

The interface for option selections is standard GEM buttons and dialogs. Eaassyy! COLOR SCAN uses your currently selected fileselector of choice (UIS, LGS, etc.)

OVERALL IMPRESSION-

Excellent! Currently this is the only program of it's type for the ST

and darn well worth the price. If you own a scanner of any type that will produce a dithered image you owe it to yourself to purchase this program. The use of your scanner will increase exponentially!

PROGRAMMING NOTES

COLORSCAN was written entirely (no machine code nor compiled assembler) in GFA BASIC Version 3.5 and compiled in GFA Basic Version 3.5E Compiler. GFA Basic is a product of GFA Systemtechnik.{If I had not told you this you would have NEVER guessed it!}

SKWare One, Inc.
[P. O. Box 277, Bunker Hill, Illinois 62014 USA]

> KNOW YOUR MODEMS STR FOCUS A Comparison of High Speed Modems
=====

A Comparison of High Speed Modems Compatibility/Features/Differences/Prices

Including: HST, V.32, V.32bis, V.42, V.42bis

By Mike Ehlert, SysOp: PACIFIC COAST MICRO BBS

USR HST/V.32bis (805) 494-9386
USR HST 14.4k (805) 497-3456
CC Speedmodem (805) 496-7320
FidoNet 1:102/1001

Edited by Jeff Rigby for the Atari Forum

A High Speed Modem =====

Are you thinking of going to a High speed modem?

2400 bps can be very slow for transferring large files. Modems advertised as 4800 are really only 2400 with data compression such as MNP-5 or even just software data compression. There are now some new 2400 BPS modems with V.42bis, which claim 9600 bps Thruput. Don't be fooled. A 2400 bps modem with error correction will NOT be significantly faster when transferring compressed files such as ZIPs. An actual 9600 BPS or faster modem will make a tremendous difference in your transfer time. Most 9600 BPS users never want to go back to 2400. There is a lot of confusion and mis-information about 9600 bps and faster Modems. I wrote this to help clarify and point out the differences between the different modems available IBM compatible machines.

=====

The International Consultative Committee for Telegraph and Telephone (CCITT) set the V.32, V.32bis Standards in 9600 bps communications. They have also set the standards of 1200 and 2400 bps in Europe which differ from the "BELL" standard in the US.

Unfortunately the V.32 standard was very expensive to implement for the modem manufacturers and several non standard 9600 protocols were developed and implemented since the release of the V.32 standard in 1984. The HST has already become the industry standard in the IBM BBS world.

Since the release of new LSIC (Large Scale Integrated Circuits) that make the V.32 9600 baud modems very cost effective and the fact that the V.32 CCITT standard is a Public Domain (no license or royalty), there is more price competition going on with these than with the HST, which currently has no true competition.

Half Duplex Vs. Full Duplex =====

Half Duplex is When Data is Transmitted in one Direction at a time. Full Duplex is both directions at once. 2400 BPS modems are Full Duplex. The HST Modem uses an improved form of Half Duplex, in which one direction is transferring at high speed while the other direction is sending ACK/NAK signals at a slower speed. A similar method is used on the Speedmodem.

V.32 modems use Full duplex, which in most cases does not improve performance when used on a BBS. There is one way to take full advantage of a Full Duplex Modem: By using a protocol called Bimodem to upload and Download at the same time at 9600 bps in each direction! Unfortunately Bimodem has not become very popular. Most BBS's and users still use one direction transfer protocols such as Zmodem or YModem-G.

What is MNP, HST, V.32, V.42? =====

MNP

MNP (Microcom Networking Protocol) levels 1-4 are methods of error correction in which the two modems connected verify the integrity of the data transmitted. Error correction is required for several streaming protocols such as Ymodem-G in which the protocol sends a constant stream of data and lets the modems do the error correction. This requires a clean, noise free line as streaming protocols will abort if line noise interferes too much. These MNP Levels are used in almost all High Speed Modems Made today, But Just because two modems both have MNP it does not ensure that they will both talk to each other at over 2400 baud.

MNP Level 5 is for data compression. Since All BBS's have their files archived in ZIP, LZH, GIF or some such compressed format (try to ZIP a LZH file), MNP5 can actually increase the overhead by attempting to compress the file further. Therefore BBS's leave MNP5 turned off, and so should the BBS callers.

HST ---

HST stands for "High Speed Technology" - a method of communicating at high speeds which was developed by US Robotics in 1984. The original HST modems were 9600 BPS by using a 9600 bps channel in one direction and a

300 (later 450) bps "back channel" in the other to send ACK/NAK signals for confirmation of data - a half duplex mode - often referred to as "ping-ponging". In 1989 USR improved the HST to run at 14400 bps by further optimizing their proprietary method.

All HST's sold now include the 14400 bps speed as well as the original 9600 bps mode. Because the HST 14400 bps is the raw speed, It allows the HST to transfer pre-compressed files such as ZIPs at faster speeds than any other 9600 bps modem: over 1700 Characters per second (cps). The HST has become the "BBS-Standard" in high-Speed modems. More BBS's use the HST than any other type of modem, including the V.32.

As of January 1st 1991 all HST modems also include the V.42/V.42bis error correction and data compression (not to be confused with V.32). The HST's can also be upgraded to the HST "Dual Standard" allowing it to also be V.32 compatible. The price is significant for this upgrade however, and in very few cases is any speed gained. V.32bis modems from USRobotics use an all new circuit board. Previous models cannot be upgraded to V.32bis. There IS a trade-in/trade-up program, but it's a not cost effective at \$575.00 plus your old modem in trade.

V.32

V.32 is a 9600 Baud standard that was established by the CCITT back in 1984. V.32 is full duplex (9600 bps in both directions at once). Normally this would be impossible, but using a technique called "echo cancellation", one modem can filter its own tones from the phone line, enabling it to pick out the signals from the other modem. However, echo cancellation requires that high speed modems include built-in digital signal processor (DSP) chips, which is the main reason V.32 and V.32bis costs so much. V.32 also includes a fallback to 4800, if line noise becomes a problem at 9600. The V.32 standard also provides an optional error-reduction scheme, called "trellis-coded" modulation (TCM). TCM allows 9600 modems to check for transmission errors with a redundancy bit, which results in fewer errors on noisy lines. Most V.32's include this option, but some do not.

V.32bis

It was first realized in 1989 that it is feasible to push V.32 up to 14400 bps, the same speed as the HST now runs. This requires even better echo cancellation and an overall improvement in receiver quality, so it is also more costly to produce than the V.32. V.32bis has not yet officially been finalized by the CCITT, but as of January 1st US Robotics has started shipping a new version of their Dual Standard Modem which includes V.32bis in an early but functional form. USR plans to update their DS ROMS when the CCITT actually release the completed V.32bis specification, scheduled for mid 1991. It's expected that other Modem manufacturers will not be able to offer the V.32bis technology until the 4th quarter of 1991.

V.42

V.42 has nothing to do with actual modem speed, but how the error correction and data compression schemes interface. When the CCITT approved V.42 in 1988, they decided to include two different error correction and data compression schemes. The first one is MNP, (short for Microcom Networking Protocol) MNP classes 2, 3, & 4 handle error correction. Note that MNP-5 was not included in the V.42 standard because it is only used for data compression. MNP was made an official standard due to the large number of modems that currently use it.

The Second method is the preferred method, known as LAP-M (Link Access Procedure for Modems with only MNP is called "V.42 Compatible" and one with LAP-M its known as "V.42 Compliant". If a V.42 Compliant connected to a V.42 compatible, it would first try to Handshake with LAP-M, and after it realized that the other modem is not Compliant, it would try the MNP Method, and they connect.

Most V.32 modems are fully V.42 compliant, but they do NOT have to be, according to CCITT guidelines. So when purchasing a V.32 modem make sure that it is also fully V.42 compliant, not just V.42 compatible.

There are now some 2400 baud modems which are also V.42bis compliant, so since the LAP-M gives 4:1 data compression they are advertised as "9600 throughput", which really can be misleading and confusing. Don't be fooled by any throughput claims. The raw speed is what matters when transferring compressed files such as ZIPs.

V.42bis

V.42bis is a new CCITT standard for data compression techniques, which was approved in late 1989. To Support V.42bis, a modem MUST support both LAP-M and MNP-5, unlike the Standard V.42 in which LAP-M is only an option. V.42 provides a maximum data compression of 4:1, giving a 9600 bps modem a throughput of up to 38400 bps. MNP only offers 2:1 Compression.

As I said above, data compression is not very useful when transferring pre-compressed files, (such as ZIPs) from BBS's. V.42bis has a special ability, (unlike MNP-5) to determine if the file can be compressed further or not before making the an attempt to do so. Therefore v.42bis will not slow down a ZIP transfer, and may even speed it up a little bit.

Since V.42bis is implemented in firmware, many V.42 compliant modems can be upgraded to V.42bis with a new ROM chip.

Speedmodem

A less expensive method of 9600 bps communication can be achieved without using the CCITTs method of "echo cancellation", so that a digital signal processor is not needed, making the cost much less expensive. This method is used on the Compucom Speedmodems. The Speedmodem uses Dynamic Impedance Stabilization (DIS) to increase the reliability of the telephone interfaces signal-to-noise ratio of the telephone line by increasing the clarity and power of the signal, and automatically compensating for impedance variations on the phone line. This reduces the probability of line noise, allowing the Protocols to transfer files with less overhead. It also has a faster fallback rate of 7200 bps if too much line noise exists for 9600 bps communications. This makes the Speedmodem stand up to worse line noise conditions at a faster rate than V.32 can handle.

The Speedmodem is available in two versions. the "Speedmodem-Champ", and also the "Speedmodem-Combo". The Combo is the same modem with the addition of a 9600 bps Fax, and a Voice-Mail system as well. The Combo comes with BitFAX by Bitcom, and supports any other 3rd party FAX software which uses the standard CCITT AT-FAX command set. The Voice-Mail software is currently still under development, which will allow your computer work similar to an answering machine, using the hard disk to store voice messages, and allowing several different message areas or "Mail-Boxes" to be accessed from a touch tone telephone.

A Data Compression called CSP (CompuCom Speed Protocol) is used to yield a compression of up to 4:1, giving a throughput of up to 38400 bps. This however, like MNP5 will not be effective when transferring compressed files from BBS's, such as ZIP files.

DIS and CPS are proprietary methods owned by CompuCom, Sunnyvale, CA. Because this modem is very inexpensive more people can afford to buy it, which could cause it to gain popularity quickly. It is still a new product, but hundreds of BBS's are showing support for it.

The one drawback to this modem is that it will connect to HST and V.32 modems only at 2400 bps. It will connect to other Speedmodems at 9600 bps, and the Combo version will connect to Fax machines at 4800 or 9600 bps.

What Next?

By mid 1991 the V.32bis standard will be finalized, and by the years end several 14400 Bps full duplex modems will be on the market. There is already talk of the CCITT releasing another standard, V.32ter in 1992, which will be for 19200 bps. Since these modems are expected to cost considerably more than the V.32s currently on the market, they will be out of the price range of most BBS users.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

THROUGHPUT:

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You'll see ads claiming that you can attain 19200 bps or 38400 bps with a 9600 bps modem - this is true only if you are using MNP5 or other forms of data compression on uncompressed data or text files. Any 9600 bps modem using compression can transfer at that effective rate. But for BBS use, where files are already compressed (such as ZIPs, LZHs, GIFs) MNP5 will actually slow down throughput by attempting to compress a file that is already compressed. Generally when using a modem for BBS transfers, its the RAW speed of the Modem and not the throughput which is important.

Figures of around 1700 cps by the HST modems are attained through proprietary methods not yet available on other modems.

CONFIGURABILITY:

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In High Speed Modems, there is a lot more to configure than on a 2400 bps modem. Be sure your modem comes with NVRAM (Non-volatile Random Access Memory) that can store your modem configuration, making long init strings unnecessary. Also many modems have dip switches to set the default configuration, which also simplifies things.

Your Hardware

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Can your computer hardware support the speedy new modems at their highest speed? Can the BBS you are connected to support these speeds? Generally NO. Most serial ports/Hard Disk combinations can't support over 19,200 baud. Large RS-232 buffers can help and some effort to match the hard disk performance to the size of the RS-232 buffer would be advisable. HD caches also help on slower PC systems. Multi-line BBS systems suffer

from time/job splicing further reducing their speed.

Most Modem manufacturers are recommending that MNP5 and V.42bis not be used (configured off in NVRAM) in BBS systems. There are two reasons for this, only one is mentioned by the Manufacturer. The first is that ZIP compressed files don't show any decrease in transfer time since the V.42bis (4:1) compression can't further compress an already compressed file. The second is that the majority of the BBS system hardware can't support a sustained 38,400 baud.

Why offer Modems with transfer speeds over 19,200? High end computer systems (UNIX and mainframe systems) can and usually do use speeds over 19,200.

PC software usually has an option for 38,400 baud even though most PC's can't sustain those RS-232 rates. There are HIGH end PC RS-232 boards that can easily handle those speeds especially the EISA designed boards.

The Atari ST uses a 68901 for it's serial communication. The Midi port uses a combination of 68901 and a 6850. Several years ago I was involved in a project to use the MIDI port as a LAN and we needed to find the maximum transfer rate of the Midi port. Turns out that it's speed is limited by the interrupt priority determined by the Glue chip and figures out at 31,500 bits/sec (baud). The serial port has the the same limitation so no RS-232 speed above 19,200 is available in the Control panel or in Commercial Software. (The next RS-232 speed above 19,200 would be 38,400 baud and the max RS-232 (hardware rate) is somewhere below 31,000 baud)

The Atari TT for compatibility reasons only supports 19,200 in it's control panel but one RS-232 port can transfer at 91,000 baud and the others are surely capable of 38,400. So we should see commercial software supporting those higher speeds by 92.

If Considering a USRobotics Modem

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You only need to worry about whether you want the HST (which can be upgraded later to V.32), or the new Dual Standard which is HST, V.32 and now V.32bis as well.

If Considering a V.32

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Some questions to ask:

Can you afford the USR "DS" instead?

Is it V.42 compatible, V.42 compliant, or V.42bis? compliant

If its not V.42bis or compliant, can it be upgraded?

Do Local/National BBS's support it?

What is the warranty? 5 years?

If Considering a Fax/Modem

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some questions to ask:

Does it both send and receive Fax (some are SEND only)

Does it support 3rd party FAX software?

What's the Fax transfer speed Is it 4800 or 9600 bps?

What's the modem DATA speed?

Does it support MNP, V.42, V.42bis?

Does it support other compression?
Do Local/National BBS's support it?
What is the Warranty? 5 Years?

Modem Compatibility Listing:

These modems will usually be downward compatible with 2400 bps and slower modems, Which means they are also CITT V.22bis and Bell 103/212A compatible. Most have an auto-fallback mode that will detect the highest negotiable bps rate. If the modem is V.42 capable, it will fall back to MNP if the other modem is not LAP-M capable, but is MNP capable. Modems supporting MNP will connect with data compression/error correction with other MNP modems at the highest bps rate common between the two. The speeds listed here are the actual Raw speed, and not the possible throughput that can be achieved using data compression.

Listed in alphabetical order by brand name -

Generic V.32 only

Made by a number of companies using the CCITT method of communicating at 9600 bps.

These are expected to become outdated as V.42 is added to most V.32 modems.

- Talks to other brand V.32 modems at 9600 bps.

Generic V.42 Only

If a modem is V.42 or V.42bis only, and not V.32, then it is only a 2400 bps modem, and can only talk to other V.42 modems at 2400 bps (with supposed 9600 throughput using data compression) This is not considered a 9600 bps modem and should be avoided.

- Talks to other brand V.42 modems at 2400 bps with LAP-M.

Generic V.32 with V.42 (and/or V.42bis)

These modems follow CCITT V.32 standard for communicating at 9600 bps, and also have V.42 data compression and error correction.

- Talks to other brand V.32 modems at 9600 bps
- Talks to other modems with the V.42 option at top negotiable rate.

(Some Generic Brands include:

Anderson Jacobson, Cardinal, Codex, Computer Peripherals, Digicom, E-Tech, Farallon, Fastcomm, General Datacom, Intel, Magic, Mastercom, Microcom, Multi-tech, NEC, Practical Peripherals, Prometheus, Radcal Vadic, Shiva, Telebit, Telenetics, USD, and many others just appearing. Some of these offer LAP-M and V.42bis, and some do not.)

Hayes V-Series:

The early Hayes V-Series uses a proprietary method of communicating at 9600 bps.

- Talks other Hayes V-Series modems at 9600 bps.

Hayes V-Series V.42:

The Hayes V-Series V.42 uses the proprietary method of communicating at 9600 Baud but will incorporate the V.42 data compression and error checking.

- Talks to other V.42 modems at 2400 with error correction/compression.

Talks to other MNP modems at 2400 using error correction/compression.

Talks to other Hayes V-Series at 9600 bps.

Hayes ULTRA:

- Uses CCITT V.32 and method for communicating at 9600 bps.
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Has LAP-M abilities
- Talks to Other V.32 modems at 9600 bps
- Talks to other modems with the V.42 option at top negotiable rate.
- Talks to other Hayes V-Series at 9600 bps

Telebit Trailblazer:

- Uses proprietary PEP method of communicating at 9600 bps.
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Talks to other Telebit Trailblazers at 9600 bps.
- Talks to other MNP modems at 2400 baud with error correction/
compression

USR Courier V.32:

- Uses CCITT V.32 method of communicating at 9600 bps.
- offers MNP5 abilities.
- Talks to Other V.32 modems at 9600 bps.
- Talks to other modems with the V.42 option at top negotiable rate.

USR Courier HST: (old version)

- Uses the USR proprietary HST method of communicating at 9600 Baud.
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Talks to HST type modems at 9600 bps.

USR Courier HST: (current 14400 bps version)

- Uses the USR proprietary HST method of communicating at 9600 and 14400 bps.
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Talks to HST DS's at 14400 bps
- Talks to HST (current) at 14400 bps
- Talks to old 9600 HST's at 9600 bps.

USR Courier HST DS:

- The Dual Standard incorporates both the proprietary HST method of communicating at 9600 and 14400 bps, and the CCITT V.32 method of communicating at 9600 bps. (and V.32bis 14400 bps on units made after 1/1/1991)
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Talks to Other V.32 modems at 9600 Bps.
- (V.32bis models will talk to other V.32bis modems 14400 bps)
- Talks to other DS's at 14400 bps
- Talks to 14400 HST's at 14400 bps
- Talks to old 9600 HST's at 9600 bps.

COMPUcom Speedmodem

- Uses the Proprietary DIS method of communicating at 9600 bps.
- Has 7200 and 4800 bps Fallback
- (Speedmodem-Combo Has CCITT FAX V.27ter & V.29)
- Has MNP5 abilities.
- Has CSP abilities.
- (Speedmodem-Combo) Talks to Group III Faxes at 9600.
- Talks to other Speedmodems at 9600 bps.
- Talks to other MNP modems at 2400 bps with error correction/
compression

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Anchor	(800) 541-2318		
Anderson Jacobson	(800) 438-8520	(408) 435-8520	
Cardinal		(717) 293-3000	
Codex		(508) 261-4000	
Compucom	(800) 228-6648	(408) 732-4500	(408) 738-4990
Computer Peripherals	(800) 854-7600	(805) 499-5751	(805) 499-9646
Digicom	(800) 574-2730		
E-Tech		(408) 982-0270	
Farallon		(415) 596-9100	
Fastcomm	(800) 521-2496	(703) 620 3900	
General Datacom	(203) 574-1118		
Hayes	(800) 241-9625	(404) 441-1617	(800) 874-2937
Intel	(800) 538-3373		(503) 645-6275
Magic Modems	(800) 622-3475		
Mastercom		(213) 834-6666	
Microcomm	(800) 822-8224	(617) 551-1000	
Multi-Tech	(800) 328-9717		
NEC	(800) 222-4632	(408) 433-1250	
Practical Peripherals	(800) 442-4774	(818) 706-0333	
Promethues	(800) 477-3473	(503) 624-0571	
Radcal Vadac	(800) 482-3427	(408) 432-8008	
Radcal Milgo	(800) 327-7909	(305) 846-1601	
Shiva	(800) 458-3550	(617) 864-8500	
Telebit	(800) 835-3248	(408) 734-4333	
Telenetics	(800) 822-4267	(714) 779-2766	
USD	(800) 631-4869	(205) 430-8000	
USRobotics	(800) DIAL-USR	(708) 982-5001	(708) 982-5092

Price Comparisons

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Many Modem Manufactures offer BBS Sysop special prices directly, at 50% off retail price. Then the Sysop must agree to use the Modem on the BBS for some set amount of time, and include a banner in the logon screen mentioning the presence of the modem.

Generic Brands		Retail	Sysop
V.32 Only	EXT	\$650-\$1,000	????
V.32/V.42	EXT	\$700-\$1,000	????
V.32/V.42bis	EXT	\$700-\$1,200	\$339+

Software Included: Varies (most externals come without software) Warranty: Varies 1-5 years

Cardinal

V.32/V.42bis MNP 5 EXT \$350-\$400 \$300+

9600, 4800, 2400, 1200, 300, 1200/75 Baud Rates

V.32, V.22bis, V.22, V.21, Bell 103 & 212A Standards

AT Command set with Extensions, NVRAM, Auto Speed Conversion/Adaptive circuitry.

Software Included: None

Warranty: 1 year

Hayes	Retail	Sysop
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Ultra V.32/V.42	\$1,199	\$599
V-Series V.42 (not V.32)	\$999	\$499
V-Series 9600	\$799	\$399

Software Included: None

Warranty: 2 years

COMPUcom	Retail	Sysop
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Speedmodem Champ (INT)	\$169	N/A
Speedmodem Combo (INT)	\$279	\$169

The Combo includes BitFax and Voice-Mail software

Warranty: 5 years

Intel	Retail	Sysop
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9600EX	\$799	\$399

Software included: None

Warranty: 5 years

Practical Peripherals	Retail	Sysop
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V.32/V.42 EXT	\$699	\$339
V.32/V.42 INT	N/A	N/A

Software Included: None

Warranty: 5 Years

Note: Originally these modems had several incompatibilities with other V.32 modems such as USR. I'm told that P.P. has now fixed the bugs, and is now shipping a reliable product.

Telebit	Retail	Sysop
-----	-----	-----
T1000	???	???
T1500 V.32	???	???
TrailBlazer INT	???	???
Trailblazer EXT	???	???
T2500 V.32/V.42	???	???

(anyone have info on these?)

Warranty: 5 years

USRobotics	Retail	SysOp
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Courier Dual Standard E	\$1,595	\$699
Courier Dual Standard I	\$1,395	\$649
Courier V.32/V.42 EXT	\$1,099	\$599
Courier V.32/V.42 INT	\$949	\$577
Courier HST 14.4 EXT	\$995	\$449
Courier HST 14.4 INT	\$895	\$405
DS Upgrade Kit for HST EXT	\$599	\$300
DS Upgrade Kit for HST INT	\$499	\$250

Software included: None

Warranty: 2 Years (extended warranties available for \$25 per year)

Document updates:

Date	Release	Comments
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10/30/90	1.0	Initial Release. Should have run a spell checker!
11/08/90	1.1	Spelling fixes, V.32bis update, Speedmodem update
01/10/91	1.2	USR V.32bis Update, other minor corrections
01/15/91	1.3	USR V.32bis corrections, Speedmodem update, more spelling
		fixes. Thanks to Remco Treffcorn
02/13/91	1.4	Minor corrections, thanks to Bill Garfield

> STR Portfolio News & Information Keeping up to date...
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THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM
=====

On CompuServe

by Judith Hamner 72257,271

Discussion on the forum message board centered on the topic of how information should be distributed. Don Thomas posted a special price offer on the developer's technical reference manual. Several members objected to the non-disclosure agreement required of developers. A very intense debate on the subject ensued. An interesting sideline of the discussion was the proposal for a "hacker's guide" for the Port.

David Stewart had a special offer of his own for a forthcoming spellchecker on ramcard. There were also some favorable comments from members about David's newsletter Re:Port. David has posted a price list for his Port products in the library. Look for REPRIC.DOC. SPELL2.TXT contains details of the spell checker offer.

Several requests for help from new users prompted discussion of the best methods for file transfer between the Port and an ST or Mac. This discussion always seems to produce new ideas. There are also several products dedicated to easing this transition.

More members have purchased Flashdrives to use with their Port and other DOS computers. The initial reaction is that these little units are very useful for expanding storage. Steve Schlanger reported that BSE is working to try to interface with some other palmtops.

Larry Land reported on an ad for an A/D datalogger peripheral. David Hayden has been collecting information for a forthcoming article on battery life. Some very interesting information has been shared in Community Square.

> STReport CONFIDENTIAL
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"ATARI NEWS FIRST!"

- New York City, NY

MEGA STE 1 -> HOBbled!

Seems the harddisk compartment is not capable of accepting an installation of a hard disk mechanism. Hmmm the electronics are not there either. What's this? It looks like an instant replay of the "mutha board" episode of last year. Remember?? The mega ST 2 that was intentionally made almost impossible to upgrade to 4 megs?? Well the "Troll of Misery" at Atari is at it again. The Mega STE has what we will affectionately call the "Mutha Cover". It, the cover for the hard drive compartment will not allow the installation of a hard drive. Unless, of course, one purchases and uses the Atari installation kit. Which by the way, is NOT available. Why Atari?? Why this footshot now? Didn't yo learn anything from the 'mutha board' episode? tsk, tsk, tsk.

- Palatine, IL

MISSION SOFTWARE RELEASES NEW DRIVER

Missionware Software (software with a mission) now has:

>>> DeskJet 500 <<<

A text printer driver available for: *** Printer Initializer ***

This text driver was written by Bob Carpenter for Missionware Software and has been fully tested with a DeskJet 500. Look for it as file "DJ500.PDT" (It's a very short file and therefore not compressed.)

What *is* Printer Initializer? It's the "Ultimate" printer control accessory developed by Missionware Software to help *you* better control your printers. With it, you can create your own text drivers!

- * Completely user customizable (but comes standard with drivers for Epson, Diconix and now DeskJet printers.)

- * Controls any printer on either the serial or parallel port...

- * Permits control of up to 6 printers from 1 desk accessory slot...

- * Works with any GEM program...
- * Permits you to easily and conveniently send commands to your printer for selecting fonts, styles, pitch and point sizes, type output, line feeds, carriage returns, line spacings; in essence, you can easily control *anything* your printer can do from this one program without having to embed control codes in the host program!
- * The program comes with a special install program that creates the drivers and a desk accessory that later users the drivers for printer control.
- * The programs work in either color or monochrome...
- * The desk accessory is fully compatible with MultiDesk (Copyright CodeHead Software)...
- * Our programs are not copy protected (they are serialized and personalized!) and are installable on your hard disk...
- * The program, with the DJ500 driver, is now available for \$24.95 direct from Missionware Software or your favorite dealer. If not in stock, have your dealer order from Pacific Software Supply, our number one distributor.
- * If you don't own an Epson or Diconix or DeskJet, you can still create your own drivers for whatever type of printer you have. Missionware will also help you create a driver for free. Just contact us directly either via the mail or on-line.

Our address is: Missionware Software
 354 N. Winston Drive
 Palatine, IL 60067-4132

Personal checks, money orders and bank checks are acceptable.

If you'd like to contact us online, we're on BIX (jtrautschold), CIS (73250,572) and GENIE (J.TRAUTSCHOL). We also have demos available on all 3 services. Look for the file PRT_INIT.ARC for a fully functional driver install demo and tutorial (save function is disabled and the desk accessory is not included.).

We look forward to helping *you* better utilize *your* printer...Use it to it's fullest potential! For \$24.95, you can't afford not to!

- San Diego, CA

HOLOBYTE NOT HAPPY

Hate to say this, but if the Atari ST version of Flight of the Intruder sells as many copies in the next 3 months that it sold the first month (which is usually the strongest month), we won't even make back the cost of testing the game -- let alone development. Check with me in a few months if you're interested in how many copies we would sell.

Essentially, the number is so small that even if we could sell an equal number of copies to STE owners, it wouldn't be worth the extra cost of

programming.

No.19

- TEL-AVIV, ISRAEL

ISRAEL'S READY... IS ATARI?

1073.3.16743.1 Atari Israeli factory, bankruptcy? 9/6/91 18:33 36/1838
bill@mwca.UUCP (Bill Sheppard) Lines 1 to 14 of 36 (38%)

---I thought this might be of some general interest (don't kill the messenger!):

Northern California Jewish Bulletin, 9/6/91, page 16:

"Israel finally OKs Atari deal, waiting for Tramiel"

"After months of haggling and intrigue, Atari and Israel have cleared what may be the final hurdle allowing the computer company to set up a plant in Israel - but snags and wild rumors still persist. "The Israeli Cabinet gave its OK Sunday to the final phase of a deal for Atari to build a \$150 million computer-parts plant there."

The article continues giving the troubled history of the deal, detailing the specifics of the factory and associated investment company, and various accusations of foot-dragging on both sides.

Continuing:

"Meanwhile, a new twist further casts the deal in doubt - a rumor that Atari will file for bankruptcy. "[Israeli] Treasury officials said Sunday that an investigation by the accountant-general showed the computer giant is close to bankruptcy - placing doubt on whether the government will receive any returns from its generous package of grants and tax breaks to the factory." .. "Investment analysts in the Bay Area who follow Atari stock were entirely unaware of the Israeli Treasury report that Atari may go belly-up; Lee Isgur, an analyst at Volte and Welty and Co. laughed at the possibility - which he considered absurd - of Atari folding. "'If it were true, then their financial statement [released in early August] would be fallacious and they would be in jail,' said Isgur." --

1073.3.16743.2 Re: Atari Israeli factory, bankruptcy?
9/8/91 18:06 40/2541 saj@chinet.chi.il.us (Stephen Jacobs)

There are some interesting points here which are worth kicking around. The first is that Lee Isgur was an unfortunate choice as an expert, since he's an old Atari fan, and I believe he is or was a fairly big stockholder. The next is that while Atari is clearly sick, the assets (on paper) are so much greater than the liabilities (on paper) that bankruptcy seems out of the question. Basically, after the Federated deal collapsed, Atari was financially a burnt-out shell. Now that it's generally back on its feet (although a lot smaller), it would be silly to ask for court protection.

But there's a VERY interesting complication: Atari's second-biggest

stock-holder, and a major creditor, is Warner Communications (or Time-Warner.. It can get confusing keeping up with company names sometimes), a company that's in VERY SERIOUS trouble. That probably has a lot to do with Atari's bond repurchases in the last year: Warner needed cash now, rather than more cash later. If Warner's position in Atari was turned over to trustees, interesting (and not necessarily pleasant) things might happen.

Were Atari to file for bankruptcy any time soon, not only would the recent financial statement look like fraud, the bond repurchases would look like looting of the assets by insiders. The courts frown on that, too.

So given that the really nasty work of the last couple years is over, and that a bankruptcy would invite multiple legal problems, I think we'll have Atari to kick around for a couple more years, at least.

Steve saj@chinet.chi.il.us

- Dallas, TX

THE CAGLE EXPOSE!

CTSY FNET

Conf : ST Report
Msg# : 14763/14771 Lines: Extended Read: 200
Sent : Sep 11, 1991 at 5:19 PM
To : All
From : Nathan Prichard at The Melting Pot BBS, Dallas,TX
Subj : Atari's BBS?

For some interesting comments from the former sysop of Atari's BBS, here is a recent message from that same BBS.

Message : 20049 [Open] 9-10-91 3:49pm
From : David Cagle
To : Mike Adey
Subject : #20024 BBS Program trouble
Sig(s) : 1 (General)

When I started at Atari's End-User Technical Support area (in March 1990) There was one other tech person and 8 people in the Customer Relations department. My job was to help people with ANY of the products that Atari made (ranging from the original 2600 game machines up to the TT computers). Starting last October, the Customer Relations department lost some people because they had decided to leave the area. That cut the department down to about 5 people. Then in January '91, they took two people out of the department and moved them to different departments in the company, thus leaving 3 people in the department which is the main link with the customer.

In mid-June, they laid-off one of the 3 people left in the department. That left 2 people to man the phones and take care of all the orders that were coming into the company from the customers that either couldn't find a dealer in their area or had dealers but the dealer didn't have any stock

to sell them.

While all this was happening, they laid off the only other tech, thus making me the only end-user tech (that happened in Aug '90).

Then, in July, one of the last two Customer Relations people announced that he was going to go back to college and that he would be gone in Mid-Aug. Plans were made to get one of the people who had left the department back in January (and had then been laid off by the company in June) to come back and fill the vacancy. This plan was vetoed by Sam Tramiel. His reason being that the company had lost money during the previous quarter and that we had to cut back.

With 600 calls coming into a department on a DAILY basis, plus having hundres of orders to handle during a week, it was decided that the technical support position would be phased out and I would be moved into Customer Relations. At this point we had over a month and a half of processed orders that needed to be filed and many months of inquiry letters needing to be answered, but we didn't have time to get to them during a standard 8-hr shift because we were constantly answering the incoming calls. We told of this, Sam Tramiel indicated that if we couldn't get the job done in the normal shift, either take the stuff home and do it there or stay late... but you won't be getting any over-time pay for this because "we have to start running this comapny like a Japanese company, and Japanese employees stay late all the time for no extra pay."

At this point, both myself and the other gentleman in the department started looking for new positions elsewhere. He left the company on Aug. 30th and I left the company on Sept. 6th. I have no idea what's going on at Atari at this point.

Having used Atari computers for that last decade as my personal computer of choice, this really hit me hard. But... I felt that it was the best thing for me to do. I had been with the company for 18 months and I had never received a review of my work with the company.

I will continue to push the Lynx game system as the hand-held game of choice, but I am seriously considering phasing out my Atari computer system at home for an IBM PC clone.

I hope this explains everything... if you have any questions, drop me a line here or on GENie. My mail address there is ROBOCOP.

EDITOR NOTE:

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"In Japan....." Gimme a break!!!! This is the USA Sam! Just in case you hadn't noticed! You know, the country where most of your company's stockholders are. Come to think of it, why don't you try following some of the better known Japanese Customs practiced in the Japanese business community?

Also (FYI) in Japan, the average lifespan of loyal, dedicated employees is much shorter than in the USA. This is a direct result of the exploitation of the human resource in Japan. Is this what you are alluding to?? You want MORE outta your loyal workers and wish to pay them less?? TRY STARTING AT THE TOP!

Also in Japan, as one industry leader in the Atari Community remarked after reading this note, HARI-KARI for failures, is a traditional Japanese

practice.

- Orem, UT

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Dear

Thank you for your letter about WordPerfect Corporation's Atari development. I understand your concern.

Each product we produce is set up as its own profit center. The revenues from the product must be able to support the resources dedicated to it. When we first started working on the Atari version we hoped that it would do well and be able to support ongoing improvements. This has not been the case. Though it would be nice to have the full 5.0 functionality in the Atari product, the revenues recieved are not enough to finance a full-fledged 5.0 development effort.

Although we have not been able to upgrade the Atari version of WordPerfect as we have the DOS version, we continue to support version 4.1 with toll-free customer support and occasional updates with necessary corrections. We hope that WordPerfect 4.1 for the Atari will continue to be of use to the Atari community.

I am recieving quite a few letters like the one you sent. Perhaps you could pass this information along to other with similar concerns.

I hope you continue to enjoy using WordPerfect for the Atari. If you have further questions or concerns, please write again or call me at (801) 228- 5004.

Sincerely,

Liz Tanner Corporate Communications

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